



UNDER THE IMMEDIATE PATRONAGE OF
HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY.
AND HER R. H. THE DUCHESS OF KENT.

THE MUSICAL WORLD,

A WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

To know the cause why music was ordained
Was it not to refresh the mind of man,
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And, while I pause, serve in your harmony.
TAMING OF THE SHREW.

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THE Lyceum will shortly open with promenade concerts, after the manner of Musard's in Paris—admission one shilling. There is no way in which a Londoner may not have music;—he may have it sitting, walking, drinking, eating, and when the waits (confound 'em) come by he may have it sleeping, if such be his good fortune. Thus is his humanity assailed at all points, and either simple music, or music in combination with some other power, is sure to conquer him.

The *sitters* at a concert, like the Philharmonic, claim to be considered as the most unadulterated, and the nearest to perfection of amateurs. To sit still during an orchestral performance, deeply immersed in one's own thoughts and feelings, and luxuriously forgetting the presence of one's next neighbour, exhibits a creditable state of inactivity, and indicates a highly developed musical nature. To 'forget ourselves to marble' while Mozart and Beethoven are in operation, is an honourable way of becoming a block. But the more quiet we are during good music, the more we must possess our senses in full activity. It is only during a bad piece, that a nap may be taken with applause—or that a yawn is to be regarded as a fine stroke of criticism. Quiet, without yawning or sleeping—without walking, drinking, or eating, offers the most becoming homage to the muse.

In promenade concerts, the art is secondary. The chief interest here lies in the elegant perambulators themselves, who wander in pairs, finished by Stultz and the St. James's Street milliners, and arranged to orchestral accompaniments by Strauss and Musard. Now if there is any time in life that a man requires to be 'set to music,'—to have 'thoughts that voluntary breathe harmonious numbers,' it is when he is escorting a *belle dame*. We all know what witchery there sometimes exists in a little waltz movement—how it confuses the understanding and dazzles the judgment—how it exalts the common into the divine. This power of music is so well understood by the more philosophical of our street showmen, that there is

scarcely any one who exhibits the tricks of a monkey, or the feats of children walking on stilts, but he first solemnizes the feelings of the passengers and softens their natures by the tones of a barrel-organ. Without pretending to prophecy, or attempting to disturb Sir Francis Moore or Mr. Murphy in the exercise of their functions, we will venture to say that they who desire to make a favourable impression in a *tête-à-tête*, will do well to wait for the promenade concerts. There is something in a crotchet and a minim in a bar that inclines rhythmically-disposed people to generous admissions and favourable views of things. Dance-music of all sorts, but waltzes more particularly, shed benevolent influences; and thus fulfilling one of the chief purposes of the art, are in their place and season to be encouraged.

Far beneath the peripatetic amateurs are the drinking amateurs;—votaries of music in taverns, who make a compromise between the intellectual and sensual, and impart a zest to melody by sipping liqueurs. Bacchus we fear comes in for more than half the worship of Apollo, when both are sacrificed to in taverns. There are a set of cormorants in pleasure who are for imbibing it at every pore, and suffering it to engross every sense. Thus nothing is more common than that a man peculiarly gratified in his hearing, shall seek to aggravate the sensation at his nose, by a pinch of snuff. The snuff is no compliment to music—it indicates divided regard. Whatever opinion ‘mine host’ may entertain of us, we think little of the music of such as divide its claims with sea-coal fires, easy chairs, cigars, and potations of one kind or another. This love of music, is like the love of some for reading after dinner, when literature encourages a nap. But either directly or indirectly, music embraces the whole public within its circle,

ON IMITATION IN MUSIC.

The subject of *imitation* in music has excited a good deal of attention, as well amongst professed musicians as amongst those who, on philosophical grounds, feel interested in the discussion of such matters; but it is neither one that has been successfully elucidated by writers, nor on which any clear notions are entertained generally. An interesting and curious department of musical philosophy, it has suffered obscurity from the same cause which, in this country, affects the whole art, more or less, with a sort of *lethargy*—we allude to the general fact of our men of letters being no musicians, and our musicians no men of letters; whereof the manifest result has been, that those have been very eloquent on the subject, who knew little or nothing about it, while those have held their peace, who had probably something to communicate. In our limited space we cannot hope to place this question before our readers in all its bearings; but a few remarks may not be unacceptable, as helps to inquiry.

That music possesses powers of imitation of some kind, whether we believe it or not, is evidently an opinion of ancient date, and very general adoption. If we rightly interpret Aristotle, in the sixth chapter of his *Poetics*, which is concerning tragedy and its component parts, he ascribes these imitative powers to dramatic music. One of the ingredients of tragedy there enumerated, is what he calls, “a seasoned discourse” (*ἡδυσμένους λόγους*), and this is divided again into three parts, viz. rhythm, harmony (answering, be it remembered, to the *melody* of the moderns), and measure. To each of these parts, or “*forms*,” he attributes a separate efficiency in imitation. This, if a correct view of Aristotle’s meaning (which is not always to be come at with certainty on a musical subject), is important; for had the power of imitation only been ascribed to music in conjunction with scenic or other accessories, we should not have known how far such imitation resulted from

the music, and how far it was due to the other agents; but if we understand that music was, *by itself*, one of the efficient practical sources of imitation on the stage, then we realize a much more lively impression of the state of the art amongst the ancients, and seem to behold it, as it were, in operation.

The passage, on which we found this view, we consider we are justified in translating in the following manner:—

"But what I mean by a 'seasoned discourse,' is one that comprises rhythm, harmony, and metre. And what I mean by the 'separate efficiency of the forms' is, that some parts (he is speaking of those which belong to imitation) are performed by metre alone, and, again, others *by melody alone*.*"

After all, however, there is this deduction to be made from the account—that by "melody," Aristotle probably intends a mixed performance of voice and instruments, in which it is likely that the sense of the words made known, at once, the objects of the musical imitation; as in that chorus of Handel's, in the *Israel in Egypt*, where he has endeavoured to imitate the motions of flies, and in all similar efforts at imitation in *vocal* compositions, we know beforehand what it is that is sought to be represented in the music, because we hear the *words* which accompany it.

But we are not aware that sufficient evidence can be adduced out of classic authorities to warrant the belief, that mere *instrumental* music, unattended by hints or helps of any sort, was successfully applied by the ancients to the purposes of imitation. Isaac Vossius, a middle-age writer, and a vehement stickler for the omnipotence of the Greek musicians, has ventured as far as any writer we are acquainted with, in his enthusiastic views on this curious subject. The powers of imitation which he claims for the composers of the ancient time, are such as modern musicians, reasoning from what they know, would be at a loss to reconcile with the apparent sphere and scope of their art. Nevertheless, even Vossius does not allow us to believe, that these extraordinary descriptive powers were ever manifested in the pure form of *instrumental* composition; there always appears to be some *singing* essential to the production of these much-vaunted effects. The reader will be no less surprised, however, at the enumeration of a few of these, contained in the following remarkable passage:—

"They (the ancients) invented different temporal and prosodial metres by which they could represent—not only the *visible motions of the body*, but even the *hidden feelings*, and all the *dispositions of the mind* whatsoever, and so vividly, that, in short, there is hardly any thing in the world but by the power of *song* and the efficacy of these metres, they could bring it before the imagination."

[*Diversorum temporum et modorum pedes excogitarunt, quibus non tantum conspicuos corporis motus, sed et latentes sensus et quosvis animi mores vivide adeo representarent, ut nihil propemodum in rebus sit quod cantu et numeris suis non effingerent.*"]

It must be evident that the imitative powers of music are not fairly tested in a vocal performance, as not only the words sung, but the gesture and expression of the singer, will afford too much assistance to the mind to leave it at liberty to judge of the individual sufficiency of the music. Thus, for example, if you hear a singer perform the admirable laughing song in the *L'Allegro* of Handel, you see him at the same time doing his best to *laugh*, and you see him place his arms a-kinbo at the words—

"Laughter holding both his sides,"

so that, even if you were not to catch the words, you could yet hardly doubt the

* The classical reader may desire a more exact account. We first subjoin the text.

Λέγω δὲ ἡδυσμένον μὲν λόγον, τὸν ἔχοντα ῥυθμὸν καὶ ἁρμονίαν καὶ μέλος (read μέτρον with Victorius). Τὸ δὲ "χαρὶς τῶν ἰδῶν," τὸ διὰ μέτρων ἓνα μόνον περιείσθαι, καὶ πάλιν ἕτερα διὰ μέλους.

In this passage we submit that it is consistent with the Greek construction, and especially with the Aristotelian style, to understand *μόνον* (alone) in the last limb of the sentence, though unexpressed; in the same manner as *περιείσθαι* and *ἓνα*, though unexpressed, are understood; thus reading "by melody *alone*," as before we read "by metre alone." A hundred examples might be cited in confirmation if necessary. The best confirmation, however, is the sense and context.

† *De poematum cantu*, p. 5. This writer, it should be remarked, had no superior advantage over any modern inquirer in resolving questions relating to the ancient music; except, indeed, the advantage of being an eminent scholar in an age of scholars.

subject of the performance; but when, in addition to this visible mimicry, you hear these words, in which the composer has ingeniously availed himself of the first syllable of "holding" to spin out a long convulsive passage, *sempre crescendo*, on the particle usually employed to express laughter, and which he reiterates in the form of "Ho! ho! ho!"—it becomes plain, that whatever share the music may have in this pleasant piece of mockery (and infinitely pleasant it is), the words and the *acting* also conspire, in no small degree, to its general success.

But there are different kinds of imitation in music, which should not be confounded. There is, first, that sort of imitation which constitutes the essence of the *fugal* style, and which enters more or less into all species of composition. This consists in echoing a particular subject, or particular features of a subject, and, according to the strictness or freedom of the manner assumed, preserving, throughout the whole, that correspondence and coherency of the parts which may be considered as supplying, in music, the place of argument. This is totally different, however, from the sort of imitation we have been discussing, which may be named in the second place. In the *first*, or fugal sort, music may be said to imitate *itself*; but in this second sort it imitates *nature*. This is done in two ways, also very distinct from one another, and, for the sake of clearness, obliges us to trouble the reader with a further division of the subject.

1. Music imitates the passions; or, more properly speaking, it *expresses* them, by imitating their language. The best way of approaching to a perception of the secret machinery by which Music operates on the passions themselves while it represents them, is to examine a piece of animated recitative expressive of some distinct emotion, like love or hatred. The excellence of such recitative will be found to lie in a correct imitation of the tones of voice peculiar to those emotions, and its superior power over the spirits of the hearer (for we assume that the reader agrees with us in rating the powers of recitative above those of elocution), will appear to be the consequence of improving on the principles of the speaking voice, augmenting its intervals, and giving greater latitude, as well as emphasis, to those risings and fallings in which expression chiefly consists. For inasmuch as the singing voice is of greater extent than the speaking voice, its means of expression are greater. The ancient grammarians reckoned five tones only to the speaking voice—an incredibly small compass, if we consider the variety of accents employed even in common discourse, much more if we look to the elocution of the stage. But suppose we allow a perfect octave to the speaking voice (and, for our own part, we are inclined to think that the tones of animated conversation often describe as large a range), this will yet fall far short of the singing compass. A fine soprano will easily double it, and can fall or rise the whole extent at once, if the strength of the expression should require the effort. Recitative is therefore an imitation of speech, but an enlargement at the same time of all its features; it is its representation in colossal proportions.

If from recitative we proceed to the more methodical forms of vocal music, we shall probably be convinced, that the same principles of expression, though less easily defined, are equally at work to produce the same effects. And, again, if we pursue the evidence up to instrumental composition—though here it may become additionally obscured—it will be impossible to doubt that one and the same law obtains; that the emotions and passions of the mind which such music seems to express, are only the remoter echoes of those speaking accents which we recognise in recitative without difficulty, but which, in complex forms of music, become too much interfused as well as transformed, to admit of any but a general sense of their presence and influence.

This, then, is one species of imitation—and the best. It is the only one which a composer employs unconsciously; for it is the only one which nature of herself suggests to him. The rest are the fruit of art and contrivance; and none the less because accomplished musicians, whose science is a sort of second nature, can pour forth "the resonant fu^gue"—for example—without premeditation, instinctively obedient to all the laws of its construction.

2. The second way in which Music imitates nature, would perhaps be better understood if we used the word *mimicry* than imitation. In fact, it is *physical* nature in this case, which is the object of the imitation, and therefore whatever difference we allow betwixt the soul and the body, the same exists between these

two kinds of musical imitation. We must not however be understood to speak in disparagement of the latter. If it embraces some trivial, and even not a few absurd efforts of skill, it comprises many of the grandest productions of musical genius. If it includes Alexander's nod of the head, or the fixed sun in Joshua, it may boast of Haydn's Chaos and Beethoven's pastoral symphony. The greatest achievements of imitative music of this kind, however, must rank with *landscapes* in painting—not with history pieces. Their utmost aim, indeed, is to realize a sort of landscape to the mind, to raise ideas of valleys and mountains, fields and running brooks, or it may be thunder and lightning, and tempestuous winds, or, again, the shock of battle, the roar of cannon, the lamentations of the vanquished, and the triumph of the victor. It may, however, be strongly doubted whether these, and similar objects, have been, or are even capable of being, depicted with any thing like clearness in a musical composition. The same passage which was written to describe a natural storm, might just as well stand for the representation of a warlike engagement. The sunset of this composer is nowise distinguishable from the moonlight of that composer; and it would bother a jury of pastoral poets to know the one's "purling stream" from the other's "verdant mead."

"Even sounds themselves," says Sir William Jones, "are imperfectly imitated by harmony, and if we sometimes are made to hear the murmuring of a brook, the chirping of birds, &c., in a concert, we are generally obliged to be apprised beforehand where we are to expect the passages."

Some composers, indeed, have been so sensible of this, that in their descriptive compositions they have been at the pains to signify their intentions to the reader in good plain English, after the manner of that venerable concerto of our grandmother's, yeleft "The Battle of Prague," in which we are favoured with marginal announcements of the progress of the action, by no means to be dispensed with, such as "The left wing of the enemy begins to give way"—"Colonel Johnson's regiment advances in good order"—"three hundred slain and fifty-two mortally wounded."

The truth seems to be, that descriptive music ought to avoid a *too literal* pursuit of the objects of imitation, and ought to confine itself to the broadest and simplest parts of every subject; that, above all, it should forswear the attempt to mimic particular actions, an attempt which, even if attended with success, can never be unattended with absurdity, and, for the most part, is absurd even in proportion to success. In this respect, the example of such men as Handel and Haydn, has probably operated to mislead many succeeding composers—and by some misfortune it happens, that the faults of writers are more easily copied than their beauties. The literal imitations in which both these great men have indulged are sufficiently displeasing; but the *imitation of their imitations* by inferior artists is much more to be deprecated. Nothing can be so tiresome as those laboured mockeries that used, at one time particularly, to be the vogue in musical composition (chiefly in our English glees), and which are still too frequently attempted. The general purpose became lost in the pursuit of secondary meanings of no importance. A funeral march for the death of a hero was converted into a chariot race—if the "envious years" only happened to have "roll'd away;" lovers made love in a gale of wind, because something had "fann'd" their soft desires; their "pain," however pleasant, called all the minor thirds into requisition, and if unfortunately they *burnt* in any sense, forthwith we had an accompaniment fit to go to some "dreadful fire with loss of lives." Such mimics are on a par with the gesticulation of the actor, who having to observe that "misfortune crossed him at every turn," folded his arms on his chest, to the likeness of an X, at "crossed," and at "every turn," whisked round on one leg like an opera dancer.

It is by no means intended to be affirmed that music—including, of course, instrumental music—is not competent to raise ideas of visible nature; but that any power of imitation it may possess, in this way, is abused when applied to petty objects, or to parts of a subject with prejudice to the whole. It is submitted also, that no *distinctness of application* can accompany imitative instrumental music; and that this is an additional argument in favour of breadth and generality in design. Even in the pictorial art, where everything is possible in the way of imitation, it is justly deemed a derogation of its high character to introduce many and trifling details; and yet, assuredly, Dutch painting is a much more tolerable

thing than what may be called *Dutch music*. As for Handel's more literal imitations, we regard them in the same light as practical jokes—no better, or as the puns of Shakspeare—quibbles unworthy of such a genius.

That which we consider to be the fair and legitimate exercise of musical imitation, is where some general scene or action being secretly proposed to himself by the composer, he uses it—not as a copy, but as a present source of inspiration; letting it impress upon his mind—not its *substance*, but its *spirit*. In this manner a very beautiful composition may be written which, without obtruding on the hearer any mechanical resemblances to the material features of a scene, may raise in him the same feelings with which that scene itself would affect him; and this in a natural and delightful manner. We believe this to be the sort of imitation in music which Aristotle mentions as in use on the tragic stage; for we have no notion that the *mimous* was a mere musical mimicry. There is a wide difference between imitation and *analogy*—a word which would perhaps convey a more just conception of the thing intended.

It was in this manner that Haydn, according to his own account, composed many of his symphonies and quartet movements. He declared that he was in the habit of placing before his imagination some scene of beauty or grandeur, and so working on the hints with which his fancy, inspired by that ideal view, supplied him. We believe he was also accustomed to follow the course of some imaginary action, some little drama of the moment, with its chequered fortunes, its hopes and fears, and sad or happy ending.

In such manner genius may work out its own fancies to the happiest account, insisting on nothing literal, and both taking and giving full swing for the imagination. And this is the sort of imitative music which we are disposed to recommend to living composers.

WORDS FOR MUSIC.

We wish some reader would essay a translation of the pretty French dialogue of De La Motte, which we inserted a few weeks since. We wish it, because we think it would bear a very agreeable handling in English verse, and because the following, by the poet Hughes, which is the only one the existence of which we are aware of, is in our opinion a very clumsy performance, considering the delicacy and lightness of the original. We give it insertion, however, in lieu of a better.

Poet. No, Love, I ne'er will love again,
Thy tyrant empire I abjure;
My weary heart resolves to cure
Its wounds, and ease the raging pain.

Love. Fool! canst thou fly my happy reign?
Iris calls thee to her arms.

Poet. She's false—I hate her perjured charms;
No, Love, I ne'er will love again.

Love. But know for thee I've toiled to gain
Daphne, the bright, the reigning toast.

Poet. Daphne but common eyes can boast;^{*}
No, Love, I ne'er will love again.

Love. She who before scorn'd every swain,
Dirce, shall for one sigh be thine.

Poet. Age makes her rays too faintly shine;
No, Love, I ne'er will love again.

Love. But should I give thee charms to obtain
Flora, the young, the bright, the gay!
I see thee blush—now, rebel, say
"No, Love, I ne'er will love again."

Poet. Ah! charming god, prepare a chain,
Eternal, for that fair and me;—
Yet still know, every fair but she, †
I've vowed I ne'er will love again.

^{*} A total misconception of the French, which is "n'est que Uelle."

† A poor version of "tout ce qui n'est point elle."

DR. ARNE AND THE ITALIANS.

In our article on Nationality in Music, the week before last, we remarked on the unreasonableness of much of the opposition offered to the Italian company in London, and on the blindness, generally, of this larger sort of sectarianism, which turns a whole country into a musical party and opposes another musical party to it, to the "worse confounding" of the confusion of ideas always more or less prevailing on the subject of international interests. That of which the absurdity is hardly obvious to us in our own case, should be contemplated from a distance, in the case of others, and then its absurdity becomes palpable enough. We are in England too sober perhaps ever to realize such a state of public commotion as our neighbours in France have frequently raised in connexion with musical affairs. The feuds of Lulli and Rameau, and of Gluck and Piccini, were to France a sort of civil wars, a kind of white and red rose conflict of the whole *nation Parisienne*, arraying father against son, and brother against brother, and dismembering the entire social body. But though hardly lively enough in our country for such disorders as these, we can manage to go very ridiculous lengths sometimes, as in the case of Handel *versus* Bononcini; and, for aught we know, if anything should happen to stop up that usual outlet for our national ardour—politics, if all grievances were redressed (which God forbid!), then, for want of sustenance, our pugnacity—our "combativeness," to speak phrenologically,—might fasten upon music as an easy prey, and make a regular meal of it. At any rate, we cannot but feel apprehensive, when we see what we have heretofore accomplished in that way, and what a respectable degree of acrimony we still, in the very heat of our political conflicts, have leisure to develop.

We met lately with a passage in Churchill's *Rosciad*, wherein that caustic poet, who seems to have belonged to the *English party*, maketh a dreadful onslaught on poor Arne and the Italians of that day—with what grace or propriety, the reader shall judge for himself.

"Let Tommy Arne, with usual pomp of style,
Whose chief, whose only merit's to compile,
Who, meanly pilfering here and there a bit,
Deals music out as Murphy deals out wit,
Publish proposals, laws for taste prescribe,
And chaunt the praise of an Italian tribe;
Let him reverse kind Nature's first decrees,
And teach e'en Brent a method not to please;
But never shall a truly British age
Bear a vile race of eunuchs on the stage.
The boasted work's called National in vain
If one Italian voice pollutes the strain.
Where tyrants rule and slaves with joy obey,
Let slavish minstrels pour th' enervate lay;
To Britons far more noble pleasures spring
In native notes, whilst Beard and Vincent sing."

Such stuff might do for an age when every foreigner was held for a "natural enemy." We have passed that point of national enlightenment, we hope.

SUBJECT FOR A CANTATA.

We promised to assist our readers to occasional verses for music—for the good qualities of which we would vouch and then let them be "set," or set aside as inclination might prompt. The title of the proposed cantata should be "The tribulations of a Patron of Music." It is a scene out of real life, acted in many a man's experience—but never before so comically verified.

We are to suppose a doctor who is a great enthusiast in music, and an amateur composer and performer, very ambitious of applause, but withal so leaden in his touch that the moment his fingers come in contact with the keys his hearers fall asleep. He tries to keep his audience awake by treating them with little junkets;

but this only makes matters worse—they sleep the more. The disappointed doctor turns to his servant-maid Sarah for consolation, and is amazed at her utter want of sympathy. After an instrumental introduction:

AIR—BY THE DOCTOR.

Awake! I say, awake, good people;
And be for once, alive and gay;
Come, let's be merry; stir the tippie
How can you sleep
Whilst I do play? How can you sleep, &c.

CHORUS.

Pardon, O! pardon, great musician!
On drowsy souls some pity take;
For wondrous hard is our condition
To drink thy beer,
Thy strains to hear,
To drink,
To hear,
And keep awake!

SOLO—BY THE DOCTOR.

Hear but this strain—'twas made by Handel,
A wight of skill and judgment deep.
Zoonters, they're gone—Sal—bring a candle—
No—here is one, and he's asleep.

DUET—BY THE DOCTOR AND SALLY.

Dr. How could they go
Whilst I do play?

Sal. How could they go!
How should they stay?

SHENSTONE.

We have come to the conclusion that this piece should be in the key B flat. The first air by the doctor should rather be an aria parlante or recitative. The chorus must enter in G minor in pathetic and slow notes by way of introduction, and at the words "for wondrous hard," the principal theme of a slow chromatic fugue should be announced. A moving counter-subject would be found in the other words, and after suitable elaboration the whole should subside to pianissimo, and go off in a kind of snore on the dominant. The composer is to give an opportunity for emphatic declamation on the word "Zoonters," in the next solo. A brilliant duet in which that baggage Sally ought to be conspicuously impertinent to her master, will wind up the whole with this valuable moral—that good music is its own recommendation. The rich composer may make feasts, and extort compliments, but honest nature will at last have her own way, and forbid us to admire where there is nothing really admirable.

REVIEW.

A Collection of National English Airs consisting of Ancient Song, Ballad, and Dance Tunes, interspersed with Remarks and Anecdote, and preceded by an Essay on English Minstrelsy. The Airs harmonized for the Pianoforte, by W. Crotch, Mus. Doc., G. A. Macfarren, and J. Augustine Wade. Edited by W. Chappel. Part I.

This very agreeable work will be found equally companionable by the fireside or at the pianoforte. It is in the long nights of winter more especially that our sympathy with the past becomes most active;—in the pages of old novels and old plays with their portraiture of manners, costume and character, there is such a re-

source for an idle hour by the chimney nook as we should unwillingly exchange for any more active entertainment. But there is no part in the history of our ancestors concerning which we feel a greater curiosity than in their pleasures and amusements. Of their music for example—from the tune of old “Sir Simon the King,” with which, as it were but the other day, the dutiful Sophia Western played her fox-hunting father to sleep in his chair after dinner,* up to that which a few centuries before had regaled the ears of my Lord Abbot in his unbending private hours, we should be glad to know every thing. The remains of our national secular music have however been grossly neglected. If in Lydgate’s time there were

“Divers plente of plesances
And many unkouth notys new,”

we may be sure that amateurism was in a highly prosperous state, and that the minstrels were making great struggles against commonplace. Chaucer’s squire passed his time very much in the manner of a modern young man of fashion,

“Singing he was or *floyting* (fluting) all the day.”

The same poet has an exquisite description of the effect of music on a musician. The mendicant friar is as much moved by his own performance, as a modern artist would be by one of the most enthusiastic inspirations of Mozart and Beethoven.

“In his harping, when that he had songe,
His eyen twinkled in his head aight
As don the starrès in a frosty night.”

Something very admirable in its way must have been heard to suggest so lively a description.

The secular music of this country would open a most interesting field of historical inquiry to any one who had leisure to engage in it. Knowing, from the experience of twenty years, what extraordinary revolutions in taste take place:—having seen cadences and forms of melody that come in and go out like the spring fashions: it is sufficiently evident that all music which is not founded on some standard of excellence, independent of present impression or the capricious appetite for novelty, is perishable. In our church services, even if we go back to the time of Tallis, we discover nothing old-fashioned, stiff, or pedantic. We hear sublime and simple harmonies, but they are no more *old* in the contemptuous sense of the word, than is the Gothic column or the Saxon arch, which to this day we view embodying the sentiment of religion and hallowed by antiquity, with probably more exquisite feelings than did the original architects. In like manner the melodies of the earliest church composers have lost none of their penetrating qualities;—the touching strains of old Farrant live in the church books, and in our own hearts; while the compositions of Milton’s much admired friend, Henry Lawes, are totally overwhelmed by time.

That the English in the earliest times were not only great encouragers of music and poetry, but great artists in the same, there is no doubt. The modern Flemings claim to be the inventors of counterpoint, which, according to them, originated with Ockenheim; but an old writer of their own nation, John Tinctor, who being nearer to the time may possibly be nearer to the truth, refers the invention of this art to the English in the person of John de Dunstable. Facts like these being

* It was Mr. Western’s custom every afternoon, as soon as he was drunk, to hear his daughter play upon the harpsichord. Tom Jones, vol. 1, p. 169.

Our readers may be as much diverted as we have been by the perusal of “Old Sir Simon.” We can only afford them here one verse, which for its fine jovial gusto, and adaptability to the nature of Squire Western, cannot be too much admired.

Considering in my mind
I thus began to think:
If a man be full to the throat
And cannot take off his drink,
He may hang up himself for shame
So the tapster at the Crown,
Whereupon this reason I frame
Drink will make a man drunk,
Drunk will make a man dry,
Dry will make a man sick,
And sick will make a man die.
Says Old Sir Simon the King.

exceedingly difficult of proof—are perhaps unworthy controversy, though our own country being at present so unwarrantably attacked by foreigners for its deficiency in music, might be excused for exhibiting its once decisive superiority. It should be generally known that the oldest MS. of music in parts extant, is the Canon "*Sumer is i cumen in*," preserved in the Harleian Library in the British Museum. In this document there is presumptive evidence in favour of the English as the originators of counterpoint.

Be this as it may, we were notoriously great encouragers of "Menstrales," "Fidellers," and "Trompoters." The minstrel wore a dress which procured him audiences of noblemen, and even admission to the king's presence whenever he liked. He was often a man as much caressed in distinguished circles as Rubini or Lablache at the present day. If he performed in the hall of a monastery he had the honour of supping in the "painted chamber" or some other notable apartment with the sub-prior. A fider or a trompote was treated with less distinction, but was probably taken good care of, and imbibed many noggins of potent ale at the buttery.

Of the sort of music these artists exhibited while the plain chant only existed in cathedrals nothing can be known, and scarcely a conjecture hazarded. We are utterly ignorant of their instruments, and of their mechanism of play. Before rhythm, or the division of time into bars was known, how wild and incomprehensible must have been instrumental performance! Even as late as the time of Purcell, it is said to have been a work of uncommon difficulty to keep half-a-dozen instrumental players together. As for the more renowned minstrels they had probably the instinct of future musical discoveries, and played rhythmically as M. Jourdain talked prose, without knowing it.

When there were many performers collected into a band, the effect must have been odd, as for instance, in the origin of military music:—Henry V. was accompanied to France by a band, consisting of ten clarions and other instruments, whose business it was to play for one hour, morning and evening, at head-quarters. What an instructive score this would be for any modern connoisseur in the effects of regimental music! Chaucer, in his *Nonnes Priestes* tale, makes a comparison that piques curiosity,—

"His vois was merrier than the mery orgon,
On massè days that in the churches gon."

How did they play in days when the organ sounded *merry*? Perhaps, as they now do in Italian churches and convents, where, according to a recent account, he who can best run about, and play the quickest passages with both hands is the best player. The mechanism of their performance must have been curious. Even in the middle of the last century, the Abbé Vogler, who obtained some reputation as a bravura clavier performer, used to execute all his runs with the thumb and first finger alone. A true history of instrumental performance would show us, that men have again and again invented systems for themselves, and that human ingenuity in that respect has, till within late years, been never ending, still beginning. If Dr. Bull (as our friend Mr. Warren lately informed us) played rapid runs in thirds and sixths with his left hand, he accomplished a difficulty as great as any to be found in Thalberg or Moscheles.*

The first great impulse of the English towards song-singing took place about the time of Henry VIII. Hollinshed mentions the prince, as exercising himself daily in "shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, pitching the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, vernalgals, in setting of songs, and making of ballads." We are thankful that this right royal composer is not at present working for the houses of Mori and Co., or Cocks and Co.; for the task of criticising him might not be very pleasant. His service in Boyce, in which Tallis certainly helped him, does not indicate peculiar dispositions for the ballad. We would be glad to extrude from the respectable society of musicians, such royal virtuosi as Nero and Henry VIII.

* The art of playing extempore on a ground bass exhibited one of the most singular efforts of instrumental execution in former times. Christopher Simpson, in a treatise on the Division Viol, dedicated to his pupil, Sir John Boiles, describes contests of skill carried on between two players by alternately inventing some florid division on the progress of a given bass, as very frequent in his day. To accomplish this task promptly and neatly, must have required no ordinary share of invention, as well as skill of hand.

From the time of bluff Hal, we gradually became a ballad-singing nation. And now we must mention the pleasure it will give the reader of taste, to observe the immense proportion of songs and tunes in the collection before us, that have either an historical or a literary interest. Our eye rests at this moment on "Green Sleeves," and "Green Sleeves" we recognize as a capital old tune in the "Beggar's Opera." But who can think of this tune without recollections of Fa'staff, and that gallant defiance of fate with which he surrenders to Mrs. Ford!

Falstaff. Let the sky rain potatoes! let it thunder to the tune of Green Sleeves, hail kissing-comfits, and snow eringoos, let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here." (*Embracing her.*) Such a sentence as this is enough to render the tune immortal. But Mrs. Ford has also a sentence in which the tune is commemorated:—"I shall think the worse of fat men * * * I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the hundredth psalm to the tune of Green Sleeves."

We find among the dances a galliard, possibly the very one to which Sir Toby refers in "Twelfth Night," when he observes to Sir Andrew,—“I did think by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.” This dance “consisted of two different parts in which at first the dancers moved slowly and smoothly along, afterwards capering sometimes along the room, and sometimes across.” There seems to be some mistake in the song, “How stands the glass around.” The second stanza is in a different measure from the first, and will not admit the same tune. The words are complete in themselves, have no necessary connection with any antecedent, and are plainly the commencement of a soldier’s drinking song:—

“Why, soldiers, why
Should we be melancholy boys!
Why soldiers, why?
Whose business ’tis to die—
What—sighing?—fie!
Damn fear, drink on, be jolly boys—
’Tis he—you and I
Cold—hot, wet, or dry,
We’re always bound to follow, boys,
And scorn to fly.”

We could entertain the reader with a long catalogue of the titles of old songs, in each of which he would find something to pique his curiosity; but we must recollect that our space is limited. If he would know what tune it was that King Charles II. hummed over the shoulder of poor Tom D’Urfey, or the coranto in which Sir Andrew was advised to go to church, or prosecute a world of other pleasing inquiries into the antiquities of secular music and the jovialities of our progenitors, he must turn to this volume. That we take a place by the side of Scotland or Ireland in national music, we will not affirm. Our tunes are less lugubrious—less expressive of the softer emotions, but they have a manly open character that embellishes the *beau-ideal* of John Bull, celebrated in an alliterative song of the last century as the “beef-eating, beer-drinking Briton.”

With the manner in which the tunes are harmonized we are in general well pleased. The melodies are often left to speak for themselves in two parts only—a plan desirable in handling tunes of much originality of character. In those cases in which the melody was so old as to leave its accompaniment to conjecture, the harmony has been slightly modernized. There is, however, no instance of that ostentation of science by which the Irish melodies of the late Sir John Stevenson were so often defaced.

On the whole, we have not for a long time handled a volume with greater satisfaction than the one before us, which at this season of Christmas Annuals and New Years’ Gifts, makes a timely appearance, and should have an extensive circulation. All that tends to encourage the best part of nationality—to spread the love of our good old poetry—and our genuine, hearty unpretending old tunes, must have the sincere good wishes of every “true-born” Englishman. We find ourselves getting violently national—it is time to leave off.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—EXETER HALL.

Solomon was given on Wednesday evening, to the great delight of a crowded auditory. The cheerful magnificence of this work, and its plain and intelligible character, render it popular. Its double choruses, responded from side to side, show off the Exeter Hall force as scarcely any thing else does. A burst of enthusiastic admiration followed the fugued part of the chorus 'From the Anser;' it was admirably performed, and most effective. We regret not to have heard the chorus—your Harps and Cymbals—nor the fine chain of choruses in the third part of the oratorio illustrative of the passions;—but what we did hear, confirms our opinion of the steady progress of the society. The wavering and uncertainty which in a concourse of performers spread over so large a space, sometimes give an effect of *Contra tempo*, are gradually diminishing, and the execution of the choruses altogether is becoming more firm and precise. Phillips sang the evocation at the opening of the Temple most beautifully. His voice was in admirable order. Miss Birch delighted us by her delicious tones (her voice is becoming exquisite), but her style is bad. There ought to be a much holier, purer, more exalted feeling in 'What though I trace' than she put into it. Let her sing more simply, and be more sparing of her trills, and she will gain the suffrages of musicians. Hobbs and A. Novello assisted, and acquitted themselves well.

PROVINCIAL.

HULL.—On Friday evening the Choral Society gave their first concert for the season; it was held in the Theatre Royal, and the attraction of Strauss' band drew together one of the most brilliant audiences we have ever witnessed; the lower tier of boxes was completely crowded; the upper boxes and pit were also graced by fashionable parties in dress. Of the merits of Strauss' band we hear but one opinion: the precision and *one-ness*—if we may use the term—pervading the whole performances cannot be described; no one can convey a notion of that style of playing where one mind alone appears to be operating upon the different performers. Mrs. Sunderland acquitted herself very creditably, though her voice was not of sufficient compass for the theatre; the "echo song" was delightfully accompanied by M. Frish, and loudly encored.—*Doncaster Chronicle*.

SALISBURY.—The first meeting for the season of our Madrigal and Glee Society took place at the Assembly Rooms on Wednesday evening last. A very marked advancement has been attained by the members of the vocal corps since the last season; and their execution of the quaint melodies of Morley, Wilbye, and their contemporaries, and of the sublime choruses of Handel, was most creditable to the conductor, and most honourable to the city, which can thus boast of a feature very rarely to be met with in a provincial town, in the perfect success of so classical an entertainment. We had the gratification to observe several new members; the worthy President (A. Hussey, Esq.) was supported by our esteemed member, Woodham Wyndham, Esq., and by others of the principal inhabitants.—*Salisbury Herald*.

STOCKTON.—On Monday evening last, Master Proudlock, assisted by the gentlemen of the Stockton Philharmonic Society, under the superintendence of their leader, Mr. S. Jewson, gave a concert of vocal and instrumental music at the Town Hall, Guisborough, to a numerous and highly respectable audience. Master Proudlock, who, we understand, is only seven years of age, performed a solo on the violin, by Viotti, which elicited much applause.—*Durham Advertiser*.

HARTLEPOOL.—The inhabitants have recently purchased, by voluntary subscription, a powerful organ for the parish church, and it was first used on Sunday last. A selection of sacred music was performed in a very pleasing and efficient style by several resident amateur ladies and gentlemen. A lady amateur presided at the organ. The funds raised, together with the collections made after the morning and evening services, nearly amounted to the entire cost of the instrument.—*Durham Advertiser*.

BATH.—A meeting of the parishioners of St. Peter and St. Paul was held on Thursday the 22d ult., for appointing an Organist to the Abbey Church, in which a large instrument has been recently erected. After much discussion the consideration of the question was adjourned *sine die*, the Rector and Churchwardens claiming the right of electing an organist, to which the parishioners object. There were only four candidates.

BERWICK.—The organ lately erected for the Philharmonic Society, by Mr. John Brown, of York, and placed in the King's Arms Assembly Room here, was opened on Thursday last, in the presence of a very numerous and highly respectable audience, by Mr. Ions, organist of St. Nicholas Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Mr. Hixson, organist of Howick Church, who has for some time past officiated as conductor of the Society. Upwards of 400 persons were present. The programme consisted of a selection of sacred music. The amateurs acquitted themselves in the choruses from the Messiah much better than we could possibly have anticipated. They were very materially assisted by Mr. J. Little, who executed the air from the Creation, "Now Heav'n in fullest glory," very creditably. Who was, however, evidently labouring under severe indisposition. Mr. Ions' performance of Rink's Organ Concerto, displayed his talents and the powers and capabilities of the organ most charmingly. The change of temperature in the room affected the organ so much as to put it considerably out of tune before the overture to the Zauberpöte was executed. Mr. Hixson conducted the singers with his usual ability; and the concert, on the whole, went off admirably. We never saw so numerous an assemblage at any previous concert in Berwick.—*Berwick Warrier*.

BRIGHTON.—Young Regondi, who is sojourning here, gave a concert on Friday morning, November 30, which was very well attended, when we take the boisterous state of the weather into consideration; his performance on that unprofitable instrument, the guitar, elicited very great applause, and he delighted the company with his concertina, on which he produces some very beautiful effects. Mr. F. Chatterton acquitted himself well, in a brilliant solo on the harp. Miss Bruce sang Handel's "Let me wander," also "Jock o' Hazledean," and a very pretty song by Mrs. Barrett Lennard, "Thou canst not restore me;" she also sung "Per piacere" with Mr. Parry, jun., who gave his Buffa trio with excellent effect, and "The charming Woman," the latter was encored, when he introduced several new stanzas which told well. Madlle. Ostergaard sang "Idole de ma vie," also "Dunque io son," with Mr. Parry, very successfully. Our respected townsman, Mr. Gutridge, presided at the pianoforte. The concert afforded the highest gratification to the company, if we may judge from the marks of approbation bestowed on the various performances.

Miss Chambers (the banker's daughter) gave a *soirée musicale* a few evenings since. The company was numerous, and of a superior class; the selections were judicious, and the concert altogether went off with great spirit. Miss Chambers, Mademoiselle Ostergaard, Signor Sola, Mr. S. Bennett, Mr. A. Sola, Miss E. F. O'Brien, and Mr. C. J. Griesbach were the principal vocal and instrumental performers, and they severally acquitted themselves to the gratification of the audience.

GLASGOW.—Mr. Macfarlane's concert came off on Thursday evening, in the Monteith Rooms, with great *eclat*—the audience being both numerous and fashionable. We were much delighted with his trumpet fantasia, which was a masterly performance. The cornopean is an exceedingly pretty instrument, and now that its capabilities have been so ably developed by Mr. Macfarlane, it will, doubtless, become an especial favourite in Glasgow. On this occasion Miss Macfarlane made her *debut*, and was rapturously encored in the cavatina, "Tell me my heart." This young lady has a voice of great power and sweetness, and gives every promise of soon becoming a first-rate singer. Miss Hilpert, too, acquitted herself to admiration, particularly in the execution of a very difficult cavatina by Nicolino. The pianoforte concert was perfect; and Mr. Johnson's performance on the violin was deservedly applauded, and called for a second time. The duet for the voice and cornopean—"Ai Nostri Gemit" (*Caraffa*)—was very beautiful, and the two blended well together. The concert was ably led by Mr. Dewar of Edinburgh.—*Glasgow Courier*.

COVENTRY.—On Monday evening, one hundred and twenty members of the Choral Society sat down to a sumptuous dinner at the Craven Arms Hotel, to celebrate their fourth anniversary. Three tables were set out with every delicacy of the season. Mr. Simms presided at the centre table.—Alderman Ratliff at the right, and Mr. James Johnson at the left. Grace was sung before dinner—"Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and after the cloth was drawn, *Non Nobis*, by the members of the society. Various toasts, songs, and glees were given during the evening, and a spirit of harmony and good-will pervaded the whole of the assembly.

A complete silver breakfast service and salver have been presented to Mr. Simms, the latter having engraved upon it the following inscription:—

"This Salver and Breakfast Service was presented to Mr. Edward Simms, Organist of St. Michael's Church, Coventry, by a numerous circle of his friends and fellow-citizens, as a tribute of esteem and respect, and a testimonial of the high opinion they entertain of his professional talents. November 1, 1838."

COURT CIRCULAR.

Her Majesty and suite attended divine service on Sunday last at St. George's Chapel. The Te Deum and Jubilate were Dr. Nares in C. The Creed, King's in F, and the Anthem the Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday, set to music by Marsh. Mr. Elvey, Mus. Bac., presided at the organ. Her Majesty's visit to Brighton is deferred till the 18th.

MISCELLANEOUS.

GLEE CLUB.—This social and harmonious society will meet for the first time this season, on Saturday next, at the Crown and Anchor.

COUNTRY CONCERTS.—There are numerous concerts in embryo; one will take place at York on the 19th, at Plymouth on the 28th, at Bath on the 31st, for for which Miss Bruce and Mr. Parry, jun., are engaged. Mr. Loder gives his first concert at Bath on the 17th, for which Miss Birch, Miss F. Wyndham, F. Lablache, and Mori are engaged. There will also be a concert at Epsom on Monday next, for which several London vocalists have been engaged.

It is intended to give concerts, *à la Musard*, at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, with a band of sixty performers, selected from the Philharmonic, Italian Opera, and Royal Society, and including Harper, Plott, G. Cooke, Richardson, Hatton, Willy, and Messrs. Bauman and C. Laurent, from Paris. Signor Negri, Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, is the conductor. The price of admission being only one shilling, the success is not doubtful.

ROSSINI'S Opera, *Guillaume Tell*, was produced at Drury Lane on Monday evening.

MR. T. A. WALMSLEY, the professor of music in the University of Cambridge, has obtained the prize given by the Committee of the Ancient Concerts, Dublin.

BRITISH MUSICIANS.—The members of the Society of British Musicians intend to give three public performances in the course of the ensuing season, with a view of affording those who have composed symphonies and overtures an opportunity of having them played. It was expected that this society would have been enabled to give half-a-dozen concerts, as neither the Opera Buffa nor the Vocal Concerts will take place; but the feeble support which it receives from the public will not warrant the committee to venture on giving more than three.

MR. BRAHAM.—There is not the slightest truth in the rumour that Mr. Braham has lost 80,000*l.* by the Colosseum and the St. James's Theatre. Had both these splendid structures been burnt down, and not insured, then indeed it would have been a loss. The Colosseum pays the proprietor excellent interest for his money, and the St. James's Theatre might have been let, but Mr. Braham is anxious to get a tenant who would do the establishment credit. Luckily for him, he can afford to allow it to remain empty, until he can let it to advantage.

THE celebrated tenor, M. de Candia (the son of the late Governor of Nice), whose debut has been so long announced, is stated by the Paris papers to have made it on Friday night, under the *incognito* of Mario, and in the character of *Robert le Diable*. His reception at the Academie Royale, it is added, was enthusiastic, and his success complete.

FRAZER V. BUNN.—On Tuesday, an action brought by Mr. Fraser against Mr. Bunn for arrears of salary, was tried in the Court of Exchequer. The plaintiff had been engaged to perform and sing at the English Opera House and Drury Lane, both of which were at that time under the management of the defendant, at a salary of 6*l.* a-week; but during some time, when the theatre was in difficulty, he had been paid only half his salary, and this action was for the arrears, 9*l.* from the English Opera House, and 37*l.* from Drury Lane. The jury found a verdict for the plaintiff for the whole amount claimed.

A CHILD COMPOSING FOR CHILDREN.—In the second part of Kalkbrenner's method which consists of a selection of easy pieces for four hands, calculated to form the ear and taste of children; to awaken in them a love for music, and give them precision in playing in time, there is the following interesting communication: "As I was often embarrassed to produce something easy enough for the little hands of a child, I selected pieces for this purpose, composed by my son, now eight years old, who, since his third year, when he did not know the notes, showed an immense propensity to composition. His original ideas and the feeling in his melodies, give a peculiar value to his composition; and the smallness of his hands, has made him avoid passages which would require a larger grasp."

VORACITY OF GENIUS.—George Benda was of robust frame, but his latter years were infirm. Handel, Jomelli, Gluck, and Bach, have been instanced as examples of musicians who were great eaters, and Benda may be added to the number. Once calling on a friend, a frugal Frenchman, who had a piece of roast meat just brought in, that he intended should serve him for his supper during the whole week, and being asked to taste it, he sat down though it was between meals, and did not leave off till he had picked the bones.

JOHN KEMBLE.—"Pray, sir," said a green-room loungee to Mr. John Kemble during the *run* of the elephant at Covent-garden Theatre, "is not the man very nervous who rides upon the real elephant?" "Nervous, sir?" replied Kemble, in that deep hollow tone which was the particular characteristic of his voice, "What must I have been when riding on the sham elephant, I heard the hind legs say to the fore legs, 'Get on, or — your eyes I shall be down?'"

WEEKLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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 Kalliwoda. "Le Polonois," marche en solo in E flat *Ditto*
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VOCAL.

- Crouch, J. Nicholls. Irish Songs; Echoes of the Lakes, words written by J. Hewitt, Esq. No. 1, The Echo; 2, Nora Creina; 3, The Separation; 4, Kathleen Mavourneen; 5, The Blessing; 6, The Welcome *D'Almaine*
 Wade. Here 'mid the hills *Mori*
 —. Say you'll meet Ellenor *Ditto*
 Donizetti. Shall I never more behold thee. The words by W. Ball *Ditto*

- Donizetti. I'll pray for thee. The words by ditto *Mori*
 Mercadante. Leggo gia nel vostro cor, duetto from the opera Le Due illustre Rivali *Ditto*
 Donizetti. Io non te posso offrir, cavatina from the opera of Eleonora di Guinna *Ditto*

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Horsley. Handel's "For unto us" chorus, as a duet for organ or pianoforte (sacred) *Chappell*
 Macfarlane and Clinton. Guirlande of six French melodies, for cornopsean and piano *Wessel*
 Kuklan and Godbé. Bouquet de Roses, duet No. 2, piano and violin concertant *Ditto*
 J. Berr. "Mes Loisirs," 4 airs with variations, clarinet solo, No. 1, air Eliza e Claudio *Ditto*
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THE Society for the Encouragement of Vocal Music will distribute, in the months of April and May next, the sum of FIFTY GUINEAS in prizes, for the best examples of successful class teaching, of singing, and the notation of music. It will not be required of the candidates that they shall have followed any particular method or system of instruction; the result only will determine the award. Examiners and Judges—E. Taylor, Esq., Gresham, Professor of Music; and J. Turle, Esq., Organist of Westminster Abbey. Conditions and particulars of the prizes may be obtained (gratis) of Mr. Hooper, 13, Pall Mall East; J. A. Novello, 69, Dean Street, Soho; Taylor and Walton, Upper Gower Street; and of Monro and May, Holborn Bars.

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